It is the irregular exerciſe of parental authority that firſt injures the mind, and to theſe irregularities girls are more ſubject than boys. The will of thoſe who never allow their will to be diſputed, unleſs they happen to be in a good humour, when they relax proportionally, is almoſt always unreaſonable. To elude this arbitrary authority girls very early learn the leſſons which they afterwards practiſe on their huſbands; for I have frequently ſeen a little ſharp-faced miſs rule a whole family, excepting that now and then mamma's angry will burſt out of ſome accidental cloud;—either her hair was ill dreſſed*, or ſhe had loſt more money at cards, the night before, than ſhe was willing to own to her huſband; or ſome ſuch moral cauſe of anger.

After obſerving ſallies of this kind, I have been led into a melancholy train of reflection

* I myſelf heard a little girl once ſay to a ſervant, 'My 'mamma has been ſcolding me finely this morning, becauſe 'her hair was not dreſſed to pleaſe her.' Though this remark was pert, it was juſt. And what reſpect could a girl acquire for ſuch a parent without doing violence to reaſon?

reſpecting

reſpecting females, concluding that when their firſt affection muſt lead them aſtray, or make their duties claſh till they reſt on mere whims and cuſtoms, little can be expected from them as they advance in life. How indeed can an inſtructor remedy this evil? for to teach them virtue on any ſolid principle is to teach them to deſpiſe their parents. Children cannot, ought not, to be taught to make allowance for the faults of their parents, becauſe every ſuch allowance weakens the force of reaſon in their minds, and makes them ſtill more indulgent to their own. It is one of the moſt ſublime virtues of maturity that leads us to be ſevere with reſpect to ourſelves, and forbearing to others; but children ſhould only be taught the ſimple virtues, for if they begin too early to make allowance for human paſſions and manners, they wear off the fine edge of the criterion by which they ſhould regulate their own, and become unjuſt in the ſame proportion as they grow indulgent.

The affections of children, and weak people, are always ſelfiſh; they love others, becauſe they love them, and not on account of their virtues. Yet, till eſteem and love